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LETTER SCORES WORKING CONDITIONS
IN POZHAN FACTORY

Working conditions in Branch No 1 of the State Factories of the Clothing Industry in Poznan are a menace to health and safety.

The problem of safety and hygiene in industrial establishments was theoretically worked out some time ago. Regulations governing even the most minute details exist. In practice, however, it appears that the matter of health and safety in some of the industrial establishments is being completely disregarded.

One of the offenders is Branch No 1 of the State Factories of the Clothing Industry, which employs 1,759 persons, including 1,352 women and 65 minors.

The BHP [abbreviation not identified] directive existing in the factory cannot change conditions because of the disinterested attitude of the management. The Factory Committee of the Party also shows no interest in the matter.

The general conditions in the factory do not satisfy the most elementary safety requirements. Means of communication are bad. Stair walls are dark and cold and in many instances there is no glass in the windows. The courts are badly paved, have no drains, and are cluttered with refuse.

The artificial lighting in the factory rooms and store rooms is inadequate. The workers stand at their work and cannot rest even for a few minutes because of a lack of chairs. The rooms are crowded and dirty and there is no ventilating system in the entire establishment.

The workers have only one set of work clothes, which they must launder themselves; soap or soap powder is not supplied by the factory. Wraps are usually hung in the factory rooms and the few lavatories are small, cold, and filthy.

The factory doctor makes a [medical examination of the workers once every 6 months; the kitchen crew once a month. Medical examination of new workers is made only in the Employment Office. Very often workers, especially very young ones, work under conditions very detrimental to their health.

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The quarters of the fire brigade and factory watchmen are the worst -- they are filthy and rat infested. The beds are dirty, teeming with bed bugs, and have no pillows or bed linens.

The sanitary conditions in the training school are also very bad. Recently the labor inspector became interested and made an inspection; so far, however, no changes have taken place.

Unfortunately, this factory is not an exception. In many of our industrial establishments the health and safety of the workers are disregarded.

These conditions have a great effect on the labor productivity and, in the last analysis, on the quality of production.

(From a letter by Leokadja Bogatko.)

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